

SAMPLE COPY

**OJIBWA FOLK LORE!**  
THIS WEEK.  
Historical, Traditional, Legend-  
ary and Entertaining.

MINNESOTA  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY.

LOOK OUT!

-FOR-

Wainnahboozho

# THE PROGRESS.

"A higher Civilization: The Maintenance of Law and Order."

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## The Ojibwas.

THEIR CUSTOMS AND TRA-  
DITIONS.

As Handed Down for Centuries,  
From Father to Son.  
etc., etc.

By DAY-DODGE.

Grand Sachem and Medicine Ser of the White Earth Ojibwas, now about 90 Years of Age.

ORIGIN OF THE INDIANS.

My grandson you have asked me to tell you the customs of our ancestors and the origin of the Indians. It is your wish and I shall tell you our beliefs.

The first appearance of the Unish-in-ab-baig (human beings or Indians) occurred in this way:

When the Gitche-Manito (Great Spirit) made up his mind to create man, He took a handful of earth and rubbed it together in his palms and behold a man was formed! The Spirit below the Earth, who was a very imposing or Grand Spirit, with heavy locks of white hair, said to Kitche-Manito in counsel, "What are you going to do with only one Indian?" In answer to this question, Kitche-Manito took another handful of earth and rubbed it in his palms and behold a woman was formed, and He said, "this person shall be the fruit of the earth, and the seed from which shall come the Indian race;" this my grandson, is how the Indians originated and became so numerous.

NAMING THE CHILDREN.

I shall now tell you our customs regarding the naming of children, and customs by which their lives are guided thereafter. It is believed every child, while it is in its mother's womb, wonders in this way: what disposition its parents are going to make of it. When a child is about to be born its parents commence to accumulate provision and clothing. After its birth this provision is used for a feast by the parents. A spokesman is selected by the father who is supposed to act for the child; a meeting of some of the principal men of the tribe or band is held, and it is decided who shall be the namesake, or rather whose body to whom the child is dedicated. It does not necessarily follow that the child shall be named after that particular person, but he must in the course of time give it some name.

When the selection of a Ne-ah-wa-ain (after my body) is made, the spokesman who has been selected to preside over the meeting, now invokes the Great Spirit to guard the future of the child and give it a long lease of life, etc. During this prayer a pipe with a long decorated stem is lit, and offered as a sacrifice to the Great Spirit. The stem is first pointed to the East, South, West, North and then downwards, towards the Earth. After this ceremony is concluded, the person who has been selected to name a child is called in and informed of the duty imposed upon him, and he accepts by saying Ho!—Amen. A nickname is generally given to a child however, by the parents or some other relative of the child, but its real name is given only by its Ne-ah-wa-ain, which is usually done when the child is first sick.

My grandson, it was the custom of our ancestors to be guided throughout their lives by their dreams, and with some of those dreams he is deeply impressed, and it was this class of dreams which guided our ancestors. An Indian during his life very often dreams

of all kinds of animals, birds and other objects, and some one of these impresses him deeply. A person who is selected to name a child, tells it of some dream in which a certain animal or object figured, and says, "Ne-ah-wa-ain will be named after it, and I will go after the animal which I have told you about." His main object then is to procure the animal etc., he may have dreamed of, which the Great Spirit usually allowed him to secure; after which it is cooked and served out at a grand feast in which the friends and relatives participated. The dedicatee then commences a chant, which has been composed by him for the occasion, and of words which he had at sometime during his life dreamed of. The animal which has been cooked is a peace offering to the Great Spirit by the person who named the child, because he (god-father) dreamed of this and knew how to conciliate the Great Spirit who permitted the child to be born and allowed it to live. The Great Spirit very seldom takes the child away because He pities the Indian who has confidence in him. This my grandson, was the way our ancestors named their children.

GIRLHOOD TO MAIDENHOOD.

Bah-cah-ne-gay, or Bay-cah-nish-co-dah-way (different lodge, or different fire) was a custom followed by the women of the Ojibwa tribe, and was established among them by an Indian of whom I will have much to say later, and whose name was WAIN-NAH-BOO-ZHO. It will take a long time to tell about him as all our traditions refers to him. When the Earth was covered with water he was the being who formed a new one. But I will not speak of him to-day. It was of the custom regarding women of which I am going to speak. My grandson, you see by the locks of my hair, which have been whitened by the snows of many winters that I am a very aged man, and many, many moons ago the custom which I intend to speak of, was followed by our women. Since the old men of our tribe have all dropped away, and disappeared from the earth, and especially within a few years, you never hear that a young girl who has just reached puberty is removed or sent away from an Indian village, that is, during the time Nature is changing her from childhood to womanhood, neither do you ever hear of a 'different fire' or a 'different lodge' for a woman now. But in those days our women had strong restrictions placed over them.

When a young girl first became aware of the change Nature was about to make with her, she immediately left the village to which she belonged, and built at some distance away from it a small wigwam, of a sufficient size to allow her to lie down comfortable, but not high enough to stand in it. She then remained in this temporary lodge as long as she could fast, which was from five to ten days. She would not go any distance from her lodge, for if a man crossed her tracks while she was undergoing the transition referred to, he immediately fell to the ground paralyzed, and it became necessary for the medicine men to be called in to cure him. My grandson, you cannot properly understand without an illustration, how strong a spirit for good or evil a girl is during this period. When I was a young man I had many warts on my hands, in fact they were almost covered by them, and the old women of my tribe advised me to go to a girl who had built a 'bay-cah-ne-gay' at some distance from our village, and who was undergoing

the fasting period, and have her cure me. I disliked the warts very much, and being ashamed of my ugly looking hands, I reluctantly concluded to follow their advice. I was warned about 'crossing her tracks,' and to approach the lodge from the side very carefully, and if I reached it safely to pass my hands in to her from the sides of the lodge and say, "I have come to you to cure my hands!" I approached the lodge, passed my hands in, and repeated the words as directed. She wet her fingers with her saliva and touched all the warts on my hands, and when she had completed this I retraced my steps, and returned to the village. In five days all the warts on my hand had disappeared.

While a girl is passing this period she eats nothing of her own volition, and not until her mother offers her something, which must be a piece of fresh meat cooked almost to a crisp over living coals of fire. She will not accept this if she can forego the temptation, for the longer she fasts the more she can see of her future life by dreaming. If a girl fasts ten days it is supposed to cover the whole period of her life. During this time she does not only go without food, but also without water. It is during this time also that she learns whether the Great Spirit will accept her as a Medicine woman, and if He does she composes songs which she is to sing when she becomes such. I had omitted to say also, a young girl had to wear mittens on her hands and a cloth or hood on the head to cover her hair, as we believe that if a girl touched her hair with bare hands their growth would be stunted and remain short forever. A woman with short hair is a disgrace and an object of contempt among our people.

BOYHOOD AND MANHOOD,—LEGEND OF THE ROBIN.

When young men reached manhood they selected the longest days in the year, which was generally late in the spring, and wandered away from the villages to which they belonged, into the lonely forest and where they would proceed to build a nest in some tree and in which they would lie down and commence their fasts, which usually lasted from five to ten days without food or water. During these fasts they had many dreams, and by those dreams the course of their future life were guided, both on the war-path and in their hunts.

A young man once wandered from his tribe in the Spring time to undergo the customary fast. After he had fasted for several

[CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.]

The Indian; Right and Wrong.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these, are LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS."—Declaration of Independence, July 4th, 1776.

PREJUDICIAL VAGARIES!

It seems uncreditable that such abortive assumption of prejudicial sentimentality on an imaginary conception of a state of existing conditions, as is porported in the following article from the Duluth Herald in reference to the Red Lake reservation, should be indulged in by the journalists of to-day, and is befitting only the cheap vapoing of the writers of "dime novels," etc. We reproduce it in the columns of The Progress to give its readers an opportunity of judging how little some people really know of what they talk and write about at times; and that after all, when such gush is boiled down, one can not fail to discern

midst the dregs, the conclusive motor of this 'wishy-washy' hellabellous of 'murderers, loafers, pirates, thieves, etc., is simply used to guard the frantic efforts of the ghouls and vultures of outright robbery and fraud, swayed by the ignominious spirit of greed and gain! The thousands of acres of land, the millions of feet of pine timber, etc.,—there's the rub, that's the eyesore of the hordes of unfeeling vampires who are endeavoring by fair or foul means to get the "lion's share" of this "Redskin Alsatia."

A Refuge of Murderers and Outlaws—A Redskin Alsatia.

The murder of Israel Ryder, the wellknown fur trader of Rosseau lake, near the Red Lake reservation is a sample of the crimes that these pets of the Eastern philanthropists are constantly committing. A grand farce of sending a bishop and some other folks to make treaties with these Indians, was indulged in last summer. The press was deluged with slush about the good bishop praying for the safety of birch canoes, etc. The Indians were praised as being industrious, and in fact the whole repertoire of Boston Indianioidcy was worked for all it was worth, to those who know these Indians, this gush is simply sickening. These worthy bishop and treaty makers would hold up their hands in "holy horror and pious grief" if they only knew that all the talk given them by the Indians was just so much "guff." Indians have a profound contempt for all whitemen. They fear them it is true, but an Injun is an Injun clear through, and when he gets a chance, he will never fail to do a white man up. The Indians upon the Red Lake reservation are a very bad lot. So are the Pillagers, and the Bois Forte bands, at Net Lake, near Vermilion, and not far behind in the procession. Red Lake is a reliable redskin "Alsatia." It was there that the notorious Riel took refuge after the first Red River rebellion. When an Indian commits an outrage upon the Rainy River settlers or lumbermen he crosses the river and snaps his fingers in derision at the law. This reservation is also overrun with those pests of the frontier, the squawmen. The degraded wretches, "white-Indians" as they are generally called, are ten times meaner than the meanest Injun on the reservation. It is largely due to these men, that alcohol is easy to be obtained by the Indians. Every trader upon and around the Red Lake reservation is a whiskey dealer, and even the autocratic and dignified Hudson Bay company was not slow to send its rum to the fur hunters of Red Lake. There are thousands of acres of splendid timber lands and farming lands within the boundaries of this reservation that are now simply used as a resort for murderers, loafers, whiskey pirates, and fur thieves. This state of things will continue just as long as the sickish sentimentality in regard to the Indians is kept up. If the United States government really desires to benefit the Indians, let them be given citizen's rights, and left to sink or swim with the rest. This petting and coddling of full grown men is ridiculous. An average Indian is no born fool, and is better fitted by nature to take care of himself than nine white men out of ten. Give the Indian the same chance as the European peasant immigrant and he will probably be just as able to keep his end of the log at a reasonable altitude. One thing is certain, an Indian would never become an anarchist.

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